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HELLO AGAIN !

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October 1970

Well, it's finally happened. I'm at a point where I'm going to have to ask for contributions for the survival of this newsletter. Actually things aren't bad at all but \$1.00 from each reader would help. Any money received will be used for stencils, ink, paper, and stamps. If \$25 was received from 25 readers, the operation of turning out this newsletter would be subsidized for about 6 months. If more people helped the \$1.00 could last all year. Those who have sent in money already do not have to send anymore. So, if you wish to continue receiving this newsletter, please help out the writer, editor, printer, and mailer (that's me). It will be greatly appreciated. As of the first of October 5 people sent in donations.

This newsletter will continue to be written (as Father O'Rourke puts it) in a folksy style. I will continue to have a quiz but the prize will be a reel of programs (you still expect money).

CORRECTIONS: Bob Welsh, not Bob Walsh as stated in the last issue.

THE TAPE DECK: Descriptions: Father O'Rourke and others wish each trader would be as detailed as possible in listing their programs so duplications don't occur. I have found the following are necessary: The series, title of program, date, guests, product, network. If there is no title the opening item such as song, joke, contestant, activity is necessary. In order to do a decent job in listing programs you must at least spot check them. More than once I have received a tape which has wrong programs listed on the card. Bruce Ruggles mentions a problem in listing dates. While Americans write the month first (4/3/43 is April 3rd, 1943) most Canadians, British, and other foreigners write the day first (the same date would read the 4th of March, 1943). This would cause some wrong dates.

Quality of tapes: Don Pellow reports: Don has had trouble with printthrough on all brands of tapes. Don talked with the chief engineer at WIKY who says that Concert tape is perfectly suitable for radio programs. Don Koehnemann says: Don has had no problem with all kinds of tapes he has had since 1954. His storage space is not as ideal as others but still the tapes sound fine. Don Boates told Don that Concert is off-brand Ampex. Bill Blalock Says: He has tapes of various kinds that go back to 1954 with no apparent change in quality. Bill retaped the material and bulk erased the old tape but found that when he reused it the material had much dropout, especially music. Don Brush mentions: Don talked with Al Denson who was vice president of WNBC in Hartford years ago. Al Denson says, "All tape, no matter what make or substance is sandpaper. If you want to save wear on your tape heads, don't use your machine. Tape should last forever if kept in a closed box and in a dry room. All tapes should be rewound at least once every 6 months." Don has a "Scotch" brand tape he got in 1952 and is still in perfect condition. Who has a tape earlier than 1952?

Speed Correction: Bill Blalock uses a variable transformer to slow programs down but doesn't go below 88 volts for fear of recorder damage. Sometimes he slows twice to get the right speed. Bill also suggests not using the transformer for more than 30 minutes or so at one sitting. Rex Bills uses a portable tape recorder with a removable capstan. He increases its diameter by wrapping scotch tape around it. This drives the tape through at a faster speed. You can slow or speed up a tape depending whether you use the "rigged" recorder as the master or dubbing machine.

It's also wise periodically after dubbing a program to run it simultaneously with the master tape. In this way you can see if one recorder is slower than the other.

If possible, traders within driving distance of each other should try to get together and try to coordinate their trading. In this way they can share programs and not duplicate orders.

Be careful if you listen to a 2-track tape done on a $\frac{1}{4}$ track machine with a half-track machine. You might pick up tape noises that are on the unused portion of the tape.

It is essential that you listen to a tape before dubbing it but it is even more essential that you at least spot check a dubbed tape before mailing it out. Often one of your machines might be faulty and you won't know it unless someone tells. Also, traders should tell others about serious problems that don't show up on the trader's list or card. I do this myself and I would expect that if I send a tape to someone and it contains serious problems such as x-talk, bad hum, muffled, etc. and it wasn't indicated that way that the recipient would tell me. This should be done in good faith only for the purpose of the sender to correct any machine problems or to correct the program listing. Also, since almost all of us goof once in a while, I don't feel comments of this nature are in bad taste, especially if you couple them with compliments concerning outstanding programs. You shouldn't ask a person to redub unless most of the reel is faulty. I've done this twice, once when there was bad x-talk throughout most of the reel and when the volume was low, accompanied by a very loud hiss, on half of the tape. I've been asked to redub also, once when I had poor patchcord connections and once when I had a faulty tape and couldn't get any volume. Whenever you redub an entire reel that has been returned to you, don't redub over that reel of programs but use another reel.

In order to save patchcord connections, especially if you are constantly pulling them in and out, buy a pair of short patchcords and insert them in one machine. Insert your regular patchcords into the other machine and leave them there. Use the other ends of the short patchcords as the point of entry for your longer ones. In this way you will wear out the insides of the short cords, not your machine.

QUIZ: My first quiz was a flop. Only one person responded and with only one answer (as of Oct 3). Here are the answers:

1. Van Jones; 2. Herman Peabody; 2. Hartford, WTIC; 4. Pauline; 5. 1925; WSM; 6. Music: Joseph Breil, Words: Clarence Lucas; 1915; 7. Clayton Heerman; 8. June 23, 1933-Dec. 27, 1968; 9. Fifth Dimension by Alexander Vlas Datzenko; 10. Words and Music

Well, hear goes again. Spelling does not count.

6. 1. What was the name of the Lone Ranger's first horse?
7. 2. What is the license number of Jack Benny's Maxwell?
8. 3. What is Jack Benny's address?
9. 4. What is Jack Benny's phone number (many of these answers can be found by listening to the right J Benny program)
10. 5. Where was the farmer from on J Benny program that always said "Hey Rube"?
11. 6. What was J Benny's combination to his safe?
12. 7. What was the name of J Benny's press agent who was responsible for the fake robbery?
13. 8. Who was J Benny's piano player?
14. 9. When was The Horn Blows at Midnight released?
15. 10. What was Mary Livingston's sister's name on the program?

Remember - first prize is a reel of programs.

QUESTIONS: A reader wrote in to Charles Ingersoll and said "The Whistler and his Dog" was the theme of the Johnson Family. I have a copy of the program and the themes are Stephen Foster songs. What do you think?

MAGAZINES: For those interested in jazz join the International Association of Jazz Record Collectors. Write Ken Crawford Jr, 215 Steuben Ave., Pittsburgh, Penn 15205 for information and how to trade. A nice magazine is put out by the group also.

HERE AND THERE: Thank you Raleigh Barker for sending radio logs and articles from Radio Guide. I hope eventually to acquire a log for one week of every year. In this way I can be a source of information for those people who want particular dates or days programs were on. Years I already have are 1929, 1936, 1937, 1938, 1949.

Don Boates is off on another trip, this time to Bozeman, Montana. His taping activities will be curtailed until about Thanksgiving.

Bill Blalock is an excellent artist and has done several impressions of radio personalities. Roger Hill purchased some from him recently. I also thank Bill for several radio logs and other interesting info from west coast newspapers of the 20's, including a radio log of 1923. Listeners in Denver on Jan 1, 1923 could hear;

Markets, E C Huffman talk about news, weather, markets, musical selections, and at 9:55 each evening, the official time and weather in code. Featured at 8 o'clock was Trinshere's novelty Orchestra. Stations listed were KDZQ, KLZ, KFAQ, DD5, KOA

Rolfe Blaess entertained 2 traders recently, John Ott and Tom Whitley

Ed Corcoran sent a nice article about his trading experiences. This will be found on a later page.

Don Brush's mother was Bud Collyer's Sunday School teacher.

The summer issue of Radio Dial just arrived. Much good reading. If you don't know how to get it write Charles Ingersoll, Radio Historical Society, Box 190, Cloquet, Minn. 55720.

Warren Abbott wrote a very nice note and sent a news article about himself. Excerpts follow: Abbott was trained as a telephone company engineer and went to work in 1928 for a small radio station in New York. When CBS began a network of 43 stations, Abbott was the first chief engineer. In those early days he had to improvise much of the equipment that he used which today is taken for granted. Abbott set up one extra piece of equipment to record programs on to acetate discs instantaneously. He began to record some of the more interesting programs for his own collection, one of which of course, was War of the Worlds. Many performers wanted copies and many recorded a performance before he went on the air. Many orchestra leaders asked Abbott to record them. Abbott has some firsts of several orchestra leaders including Rudy Vallee, Frankie Carle, and Oscar Levant.

Today Warren Abbott is retired, has a large collection of radio programs (now on tape), corresponds with many radio enthusiasts (like myself), and attends meetings of the Pacific ~~XXXX~~ Pioneer Broadcasters in Los Angeles (an elite group of former radio people). He lives with his wife in San Diego County at Rancho Bernardo.

Thank you Cam Denoncour for a supply of pens, markers, pencils, etc. Cam would appreciate any information about John Charles Thomas. Write to Cam Denoncour, 9 Maple St., Haverhill, Mass 01830. Cam is 57 and has been collecting records and transcriptions since the end of World War II. He has over 4000 78's and about 400 LP's

Lewis Crispell, 188 Bayard St. Port Ewen, NY 12466. Lewis has 20 round robins making the rounds. Right now Lewis supplies the tape and puts one program on. He then sends the tape to someone else who dubs what is on it and records another program. When it returns to Lew He starts all over again. He is looking for those interested in round robins. Several of my traders are involved in it including myself.

Meade Frierson III is a corporate lawyer, is married with 2 sons, 3 and 4. He was raised in Alabama but went to school in Boston, Philly, and Charlottesville, Va. Meade is interested in science fiction and horror (first editions, comics, original artworks, rare magazines, books, radio programs, interviews, etc.).

Don Koehnemann is looking for Harmon's Radiohero Journal. (D K , 811 Bristol Ave, Westchester, Ill 60153.

Gerry Kramers new address is 509 East Quincy, #B, Pittsburgh, Kansas 66762

Don Pellow, 34, is a physical education teacher. He was born in Kentucky and participated in many athletic events throughout his schooling. He now coaches track and freshman football. Don also works at WIKY in Evansville. Don is active in various events and has taught radio in high school. He has 10 reel recorders and 3 cassettes. Don and Larry Parker collect programs together and put out an interesting newsletter for radio buffs called No-Static Please.

D P , 705 East Chandler, Evansville, Ind 47713

I have corresponded with Rosa Rio who lives very close to me. Rosa Rio, as you probably know, was the organist for many radio programs. She stills leads a full life teaching organ at her studio in Shelton. If you have any programs in which she is mentioned in the credits please let me know. The only one I have is My True Story.

Don Racette is very busy, just completing his job as Chairman of the Lake Luzerne Fall Festival, Oct 9-11. He also is involved in a Lion's Club production and is in charge of publicity for the school at which he teaches.

Chuck Schaden had a fine interview with Jack Benny and will soon be talking with Douglas Fairbanks Jr., Milton Berle, Freddy Martin, and Dick Jurgens. His Saturday afternoon program is still doing very well.

Wilbur Nitsch, 255 Heberle Rd, Rochester, Ny 14609 is trying to find all the information he can find about It Pays to be Ignorant. Can you help him?

LATE MAIL

Just started trading with Ronald Tilton, 602 Hegeman Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11207. Ronnie has over 1600 programs, most of them 2 generations or less. The cost of Concert tape went up. 1200 feet is 89c per 50 reels; 1800 is \$1.39 in lots of 50. At this price 1200 feet is more economical so if I can't get a better deal, my trading will be ~~done~~ on 1200 foot reels for a while.

I would like to see how you feel about selling radio programs. Many people I trade with sell also, just about all at a very reasonable price, mainly to cover tape and time. I would like to print varying opinions on this topic. My own feeling is that the initial expense of buying tape recorders and tape can be partially offset by selling and trading. Also some people have nothing to trade and buying programs is usually the only way they can start. I feel that collecting radio programs is a hobby and is also done to preserve an art that is now dead. Some of my best friends that I trade with also sell. I hope I can get varying opinions on this topic. If you don't want your name mentioned please indicate when you write. X-5

Many thanks to Helen Connolly for the address stickers. This type of help is very much appreciated and if my newsletter helps you and entertains you this is all I ask.

Remember to join the Nostalgic Book Club if you haven't. I sent forms to most of you with one of my newsletters. Now trading with Ernie Mack, 6 Perkins St, Bristol, Conn 06010. Ernie has a nice selection of programs. He is a printer and will make rubber stamps of your selection. Also starting to trade with Joe Hehn, 422 North 9th St, Allentown, Penn, 18102. Joe has been collecting for a few years, is in advertising and public relations, and also collects premiums. Joe has several recorders and his programs number in the thousands.

It is now October 10th and just received a list from Hal Brodsky (Detective House), 218 Orangeview Lane, Lakeland, Fla 33803. Hal is a veteran of World War II, now retired and disabled. One of his big interests is radio and he has a nice collection of programs. Hal specializes in mystery and detective programs.

Again I would appreciate a little support to help out with this project. Also keep sending in news about yourself and about trading. Anything would be appropriate including interesting anecdotes.

Write if you get work
Hang by your thumbs
Good listening

Jay

Jay Hickerson
6 Koczak Ct
North Haven, Conn 06473
(203) 239-5251

YESTERYEAR RADIO FRACTIONS

Moran and Mack, "The Two Black Crows," were a popular pair in radio and record industry in late 20's. They tried the movies and Anybodys War by Paramount was released in 1930. According to review by Theater Magazine: They "shoulda staid in bed." Amos and Andy also had a movie released same year, "Check and Double Check." It met with better success but few if any early radio comedy teams could better their popularity through other mediums.

Lum and Abner made a reasonably good transition from radio to movies in early 40's. Evidence to substantiate: several movies made and reshown on TV. Movies hampered their style, however, as each of principals, Chester Lauck and Norris Goff did three or more personalities on radio.

Bill Blalock

AUNTIE BLOSSOM

Back in 1927 broadcasters were aware of juvenile interest in the comic strip. While there were no known radio comic strip series at that time, many programs, closely related, were casting shadows of things to come. Ideas were popping up and from direct reading of the "funnies" to the kids, comic strip characters independent of newspaper stories were soon to show themselves in strength by the mid 30's.

From KGW, Portland, Oregon, an "Auntie Blossom" read the funnies to children during these formative years and the Sunday Oregonian had a column called "The Auntie Blossom Mailbag," devoted to response from children. There were no doubt several Aunt Blossoms in American homes at the time but the Auntie Blossom's likeness that headed the column was that of Frank King's creation in strip "Gasoline Alley." Perhaps permission was granted from King, but then, copyright laws were not as strict in 1927. To recreate those days, here is first paragraph from "Auntie Blossom's Mailbox," July 24, 1927:

"Dot and Dash; Andy Gump, his wife Min and son Chester, Perry Winkle, Winnie, his sister, and Pop, his male parent; Polly, Pa, Ma and Asher Url Perkins; our own Skeezeix, his Uncle Walt and his many friends in Gasoline Alley; all of these make mighty interesting reading and apparently very interesting material for story telling over the radio. At any rate the boys and girls seem to like to hear of all these charming characters. We will print a few more letters from little people who have written to KGW about the comics.

Bill Blalock

MOVIES IN THE AIR

The Jenkins Radio Movies are broadcast three evenings each week on Monday, Wed, and Fri from 8-9 PM from station W3XK, 46.72 meters in Washington DC. As soon as the number of those equipped with television receivers warrants it the pictures will be sent out six times weekly. At the present time only picture subjects and picture stories in silhouette are being transmitted.

Radio Index, April, 1929
Courtesy Jack Miller

THIS IS THE LIFE

Starting in the June 19, 1937 issue of Radio Guide Jack Jamison wrote a four part article about Jack Benny. Hear are some highlights of the first part. The others will be in later issues. Many thanks to Raleigh Barker for the articles.

Jack Benny was born on Washington Street in Waukegan, Ill in 1894. Jack's father was in the Haberdashery business. Jack's father was very strict while his mother was easy-going. Jack's sister Florence was born 6 years later. Jack was a poor student, from his kindergarten days on getting poor in scholarship and poor in deportment. At 6 he started taking violin lessons. His first teacher was Prof. Harlow. Jack never liked to practice but he loved to entertain on the violin. He was comedian, magician, dancer, singer, and violinist robed into one. By age 11 Benny had one long seesaw of Trouble at School, Violin Teachers, Trouble at School, More Violin Teachers. By age 11 he was playing in the pit at a movie theater for \$6 a week. "At fifteen, a gawky stripling with soulful eyes and a mop of black hair so exceptional in its luxuriance that people on the street turned to look at it, he played a pretty good fiddle." At this time Benny's hope was to become an actor.

He was soon expelled from high school for taking too many afternoons off for playing, failed in business school, and played at the Barrison Theater, then the Waukegan Theater, and then back to the Barrison which in two weeks went bankrupt. Now at the age of 17 Jack Benny was out of a job

Next month: How he made good

RECOLLECTIONS OF AN "OLD TIME" COLLECTOR by ED CORCORAN

My first efforts began in 1947. At that time, I acquired the "new invention" called a wire recorder. I used my machine to record radio shows while I attended night school. The quality was excellent. Unfortunately the wire could snare and a good spool could easily become a useless morass of tangled wire. All of the wire was eventually lost.

For the next ten years or so I did what almost everybody else did, forgot about radio and watched TV. During this time there was a great erosion of dramatic radio programs. Some like Our Miss Brooks and Gunsmoke converted successfully to television. Others like Duffy's Tavern and The Green Hornet lasted only a few months. In 1958 I began to realize that radio drama was doomed. Those reassuring announcements made during June and July that we will be back in the fall weren't being made anymore. The last straw occurred when my favorite program, X-1, was cancelled.

Now there were only a handful of shows still left; Amos and Andy, Suspense, Johnny Dollar, and the soap operas. I began recording all these shows using a newly acquired tape recorder. In a matter of months these shows also disappeared.

Dramatic radio was now gone, and I missed it. I grew up during the radio era in much the same manner as today's young adults grew up during TV's rise to its present popularity. Perhaps many of you would enjoy seeing some of the early TV efforts again. It occurred to me that there must be other people who felt as I did and perhaps may have recorded some radio programs. After a lot of effort and a greater amount of luck, I was able to locate 3 people with similar

interests; Jim Harmon, Jim Moulder, and George Jennings. (This was about 1958-59) All three had already acquired some recordings, and we started trading. Between us we had perhaps 100 programs including about 10 X-1 and an equal number of Lux Radio Theaters. We soon made use of "special 4th-class" rates and the ever-popular voice message.

When we started there was no way of knowing what shows might be available. There were no catalogs, no collectors who had great numbers of shows. Each new program uncovered was cause for jubilation.

The AFRS was the real break-through. Many shows would have been lost forever were it not for this source. Rumors keep circulating that these recordings will all be destroyed. Let's hope that tape copies will survive.

As time went on we started to gain a little momentum. Other collectors started to appear. We all got second machines for proper dubbing. Looking back to those early years, these events stand out:

1. Re-release of The Shadow in Chicago. George found a guy willing to make copies of each show for us.

2. Jim Harmon came up with two Lone Rangers. I must have listened to ~~those~~ shows twenty times. They were the only copies then available.

3. I came up with a "clean" copy of War of the Worlds" replacing the poorer version then in circulation.

4. Jim Harmon came through with "The Thing on the Fourble Board" my number one want at that time.

5. I made a trip to California and met Lloyd Nesbitt, Morris Dollens, and Marty Halperin. During the visit I became an honorary birddog for Hollywood Museum for their radio acquisition.

6. By now some "big time" traders were in the field--the most notable Barry Brooks and Gene Kellenberger, ..

7. In 1965 I appeared on WTIC in Hartford as a guest, telling all of Connecticut about my hobby.

8. We were able to make a deal with a G I in Germany to get AFRS dubs directly from disc. In return all he wanted was airchecks intact from top forty stations.

Today, of course, the situation is entirely different. There are hundreds, perhaps thousands, of collectors. The quantity and quality of programs available is overwhelming. It grows with each passing day. My own goals set when I started have been attained, notable acquiring every X-1 ever broadcast. It is reassuring to know that even though radio is in a new era, a substantial amount of its Golden Age will be preserved.

As a trader I am now retired and no longer solicit new materials. The culmination of the hobby is that I now do a monthly radio show in which we interview personalities from dramatic radio. I now meet the people behind the voice. The show is geared to please the true radio fan. I hope you all will get to hear it via tape no matter where you live.....

EDITORS NOTES: Ed has somewhere between 4000 and 5000 programs. His monthly broadcasts are listed in my catalog, are 50 minutes in length, and are taped at the studio. Ed is also mentioned in the acknowledgements of both of Jim Harmon's books.